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SIXTEEN SONNETS.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

TO

Miſs PALMER,

THESE SONNETS,

WHICH HAVE BEEN HONORED WITH HER

APPROBATION,

ARE DEDICATED

BY HER VERY SINCERE

AND DEVOTED HUMBLE SERVANT,

JOHN BAMPFYLDE.

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SONNET I.

To the RED-BREAST.

WHEN that the fields put on their gay attire,
Thou ſilent ſitſt near brake or river's brim,
Whilſt the gay Thruſh ſings loud from covert dim;
But when pale Winter lights the ſocial fire,
And meads with ſlime are ſprent and ways with mire,
Thou charm'ſt us with thy ſoft and ſolemn hymn
From battlement, or barn, or hay-ſtack trim;
And now not ſeldom tun'ſt, as if for hire,
Thy thrilling pipe to me, waiting to catch
The pittance due to thy well-warbled ſong:
Sweet bird! ſing on; for oft near lonely hatch,
Like thee, Myſelf have pleas'd the ruſtic throng,
And oft for entrance, 'neath the peaceful thatch,
Full many a tale have told and ditty long,

SONNET II.

On having dined at TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD.

OCTOBER's flood had all deform'd the lea,
And wintry blaſts the foreſt wide had rent,
When to the *Muſes Bower* I blithſome went:
Paſs'd the dank noon away in ſocial glee
With full Repaſt, and Wine, and Jollity;
But when the friendly Eve her robe had ſprent
Wide o'er the Meads, thither their footſteps bent,
To ſoften and refine our converſe free,
Two nymph-like Maids, *Phyllis* and *Chloe* fair,
They, the melodious ſtrings attuning ſweet,
To Voice, and Verſe divine, and Tuſcan Air,
Baniſh'd looſe thoughts, and lighted Love's pure flame.
If Pleaſures chaſte like theſe the breaſt can tame,
How well they fit the Muſe's calm retreat!

SONNET III.

AS when, to one who long hath watch'd, the Morn
Advancing, slow fore-warns th'approach of day,
(What time the young and flowery-kirtled May
Decks the green hedge and dewy grass unshorn
With cowslips pale, and many a whitening thorn;
And now the Sun comes forth with level ray,)
Gilding the high-wood top and mountain grey;
And as he climbs, the Meadows 'gins adorn;
The Rivers glisten to the dancing beam,
Th'awaken'd Birds begin their amorous strain,
And Hill and Vale with joy and fragrance teem;
Such is the sight of thee; thy wish'd return
To eyes, like mine, that long have wak'd to mourn,
That long have watch'd for light, and wept in vain.

SONNET IV.

On the MORNING.

RINGS the ſhrill peal of dawn, gay Chanticleer
Thrice warning that the Day-ſtar climbs on high,
And pales his beam as Phebus' car draws nigh.
Now, ere the lawns or diſtant cribs appear,
Or ere the Crows from wattled ſheep-cote veer
Their early flight, or wakeful Herdſman's eye
Diſcerns the ſmoaky hamlet, let me ply
My daily taſk, to guide the labouring ſteer,
Plant the low ſhrub, remove th'unſightly mound,
Or nurſe the flow'r, or tend the humming ſwarms:
Thus ever with the Morn may I be found,
Far from the hunter-band's diſcordant yell;
So in my breaſt Content and Health ſhall dwell,
And conſcious Bliſs, and Love of Nature's charms.

SONNET V.

On the EVENING.

SLOW ſinks the glimmering beam from weſtern ſky,
The woods and hills obſcur'd by Evening grey
Vaniſh from mortal ſight, and fade away.
Now with the flocks and yearlings let me hie
To farm, or cottage lone, where, perch'd hard by
On moſſy pale the Red-Breaſt tunes his lay,
Soft twittering, and bids farewell to day:
Then, whilſt the watch-dog barks, and ploughmen lie
Lull'd by the rocking winds, let me unfold
Whate'er in rhapſody, or ſtrain moſt holy,
The hoary Minſtrel ſang in times of old;
For well I ween, from them the Nine inſpire
Wiſdom ſhall flow, and Virtue's ſacred fire,
And Peace, and Love, and heavenly Melancholy.

SONNET VI.

On a Stormy SEA-PROSPECT.

HOW fearful 'tis to walk the founding ſhore,
When low'rs the ſky, and winds are piping loud!
And round the beech the tearful maidens croud,
Scar'd at the ſwelling ſurge and thunder's roar.
High o'er the cliffs the ſcreaming Sea-mews ſoar,
Loſt is th'adventurous bark in ſtormy cloud,
The ſhrill blaſt whiſtles through the fluttering ſhroud;
And, lo! the gallant crew, that erſt before
Secure rode tilting o'er the placid wave,
Scarce know to ſtem the black and boiſterous main,
And view, with eyes aghaſt, their watery grave.
So fares it with the breaſt of him, the S ain,
Who quits Content for mad Ambition's lore,
Short are his days, and diſtant far the ſhore.

SONNET VII.

On a Calm SEA-PROSPECT.

HOW pleaſant 'tis to walk the ſilent ſhore,
When ſcarce the humming tide can reach mine ear!
Of ſcatter'd miſt the Sun diſpels the rear,
And birds of calm the diſtant wave explore;
And ſafe in craggy bay the bark doth moor,
Whoſe ſtreamers proud and ſlacken'd ſails appear
Deep in the glaſſy pool reflected clear:
And lo, the crew, all blythe, to part no more
From happy native fields, in artleſs rounds
Provoke the lively dance; the ſmiling main,
With ſhouts, and mirth, and merriment reſounds:
So fares it with the breaſt of him, the Swain,
Who quits Ambition for Contentment's lore,
For joyful are his days, and near the ſhore.

SONNET VIII.

On the Abbé REYNALL's Hiſtory of the Eſtabliſhments in the Eaſt and Weſt Indies.

FRIEND to the wretch, great Patron of Mankind,
Born to enlighten and reform the age;
Whoſe energetic and immortal page,
From Nature's laws, hath every art combin'd
Of mildeſt policy; whoſe ſoul refin'd,
Melts at the Slave's big tear, with generous rage
Dares to aſſert his rights, his griefs aſſuage,
And mould to induſtry the ſavage mind.
Tutor'd by thee, the nations bleſt ſhall ſee
Unbounded Commerce, Wealth and Peace ariſe,
And Truth, and ſpotleſs Faith, and Liberty:
Nor ſhall thy lateſt moment want the meed
Of praiſe and joy ſerene, which virtuous deed
Procures from Heaven for the Good and Wiſe.

SONNET IX.

On hearing the Torture was fuppreſſed throughout the Auſtrian dominions, in conſequence of BECCARIA's TREATISE on Crimes and Puniſhments.

HAIL to the Sage divine of Milan's plains!
Whoſe labours reach'd the horrors of the Cell,
Brought Mercy down from Heav'n with Man to dwell,
And curb'd the biting laws, and check'd the reins
Of Juſtice too ſevere---and, lo! the chains,
At thy command, from off the convict fell,
The Wheel appear'd no more, nor Scaffold Bell
Bade him prepare for more than mortal pains.
Oh! may thy voice pervade the nations round,
And Monarchs of their Subjects woes remind;
So ſhall thy praiſe o'er earth and ſeas reſound,
Nor ſhall thy own Italia boaſt a name
To be compar'd with thine in future fame,
So lov'd by all the Good, ſo dear to Human Kind.

SONNET X.

To Mr. WARTON, on reading his HISTORY of ENGLISH POETRY.

'TIS not for Muſe like mine, in rude eſſay,
To paint the beauties of thy Claſſic Page;
Which ay deſerve far other patronage
Than the ſmall meed ſincere ſhe fain would pay
Of Verſe, grave Eulogy, or Diſtich gay;
For that thou deign'ſt inform this ſapient age,
What 'ere was whilom told by tuneful Sage,
Or harp'd in hall, or bow'r, on ſolemn day;
But more for that thy ſkill, the minſtrel throng,
Forbids in cold Oblivion's arms to lie,
Dear long-loſt maſters of the Britiſh Song,
They ſhall requite thee better far than I;
And other climes, and other ſhades among,
Weave thee a Laureate Wreath that ne'er ſhall die.

SONNET XI.

To Mr JACKSON of EXETER,

THO' Winter's ſtorms embrown the duſky vale,
And dark and wiſtful wains the low'ring year;
Tho' bleak the Moor, forlorn the Cots appear,
And thro' the hawthorn ſighs the ſullen gale;
Yet do thy Strains moſt rare, thy Lays ne'er fail,
'Midſt the drear Scene my drooping heart to cheer;
Warm the chill blood, and draw the rapturous tear.
Whether thou lov'ſt in mournful mood to wail
Lycid, "bright Genius of the ſounding ſhore,"
Or elſe with ſlow and ſolemn hymns to move
My thoughts to Piety and Virtue's lore;
But chiefeſt when, (if Delia grace the meaſure)
Thy Lyre, o'erwhelming all my ſoul in pleaſure,
Rolls the ſoft ſong of joy and endleſs love,

SONNET XII.

Written at a FARM.

AROUND my Porch and lowly Caſement ſpread,
The Myrtle never-ſear, and gadding Vine,
With fragrant Sweet-Briar love to intertwine;
And in my Garden's box-encircled bed,
The Panſie pied, and Muſk-Roſe white and red,
The Pink and Tulip, and Honied Woodbine,
Fling odours round; the flaunting Eglantine
Decks my trim fence, 'neath which, by ſilence led,
The Wren hath wiſely plac'd her moſſy cell;
And, far from noiſe, in courtly land ſo rife,
Neſtles her young to reſt, and warbles well.
Here in this ſafe retreat and peaceful glen
I paſs my ſober moments, far from Men;
Nor wiſhing Death too ſoon, nor aſking Life.

SONNET XIII.

On a Frightful Dream.

THIS Morn ere yet had rung the matin peal,
The curſed Merlin, with his potent ſpell,
Aggriev'd me ſore, and from his wizard cell,
(Firſt fixing on mine eyes a magic ſeal)
Millions of ghoſts and ſhadowy ſhapes let ſteal;
Who, ſwarming round my couch, with horrid yell,
Chatter'd and moe'd, as though from deepeſt Hell
They had eſcap'd.---I oft, with fervent zeal,
Eſſay'd, and prayer, to mar th' Enchanter's Pow'r.
In vain; for thicker ſtill the crew came on,
And now had weigh'd me down, but that the Day
Appear'd, and Phebus, from his Eaſtern tow'r,
With new-trick'd beam, like Truth immortal, ſhone,
And chac'd the viſionary forms away.

SONNET XIV.

To the EVENING.

WHAT numerous votaries 'neath thy ſhadowy wing,
O mild and modeſt Evening, find delight!
Firſt to the Grove, his lingering Fair to bring,
The warm and youthful Lover, hating light,
Sighs oft for thee.---And next the boiſterous ſtring
Of ſchool-imps freed from Dame's all-dreaded ſight,
Round Village-Croſs, in many a wanton ring,
Wiſhes thy ſtay.---Then too with vaſty might,
From Steeple's ſide to urge the bounding ball,
The luſty hinds await thy fragrant call.
I, friend to all by turns, am join'd with all,
Lover, and Elfin gay, and harmleſs hind;
Nor heed the proud, to real wiſdom blind,
So as my heart be pure, and free my mind.

SONNET XV.

On Christmas.

WITH footſtep ſlow, in fury pall yclad,
His brows enwreath'd with holly never-ſear,
Old Chriſtmas comes, to cloſe the wained year;
And ay the Shepherd's heart to make right glad;
Who, when his teeming flocks are homeward had,
To blazing hearth repairs, and nut-brown beer,
And views, well-pleas'd, the ruddy prattlers dear
Hug the grey mungrel; meanwhile maid and lad
Squabble for roaſted crabs.---Thee, Sire, we hail,
Whether thine aged limbs thou doſt enſhroud,
In veſt of ſnowy white, and hoary veil,
Or wrap'ſt thy viſage in a ſable cloud;
Thee we proclaim with mirth and cheer, nor fail
To greet thee well with many a carol loud.

SONNET XVI.

On a Wet Summer.

ALL ye who far from town, in rural hall,
Like me, were wont to dwell near pleaſant field,
Enjoying all the ſunny day did yield,
With me the change lament, in irkſome thrall,
By rains inceſſant held; for now no call
From early Swain invites my hand to wield
The ſcythe; in parlour dim I ſit conceal'd,
And mark the leſſening ſand from hour-glaſs fall,
Or 'neath my window view the wiſtful train
Of dripping poultry, whom the vine's broad leaves
Shelter no more.---Mute is the mournful plain,
Silent the ſwallow ſits beneath the thatch,
And vacant hind hangs penſive o'er his hatch,
Counting the frequent drop from reeded eaves.

FINIS.